

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks



VISION FOR THE 21ST CENTURY—

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks will provide the leadership necessary to create a commitment in the hearts and minds of Montanans to work together in partnership to sustain the diverse fish, wildlife, and parks resources and recreational opportunities essential to a high quality of life for Montanans and our guests.

DEPARTMENT GOALS—

Create an efficient and effective work environment where priorities are clear and employees are accountable, valued, and recognized for their contributions.

Provide quality opportunities for public appreciation and enjoyment of fish, wildlife, and parks resources.

Maintain and enhance the health of Montana's natural environment and the vitality of our fish, wildlife, cultural, and historic resources.

Emphasize education, communication, and responsible behavior to afford Montanans the opportunity to better understand and participate in the decision-making processes that sustain our natural, recreational, and cultural resources for future generations.

MONTANA FISH, WILDLIFE & PARKS COMMISSION—

STAN MEYER, *Chairman*, Great Falls

DAVID W. SIMPSON, *Vice Chairman*, Hardin

DARLYN DASCHEK, *Executive Director*, Fort Peck

CHARLES R. DECKER, *Libby*

TIM MULLIGAN, *Whitehall*

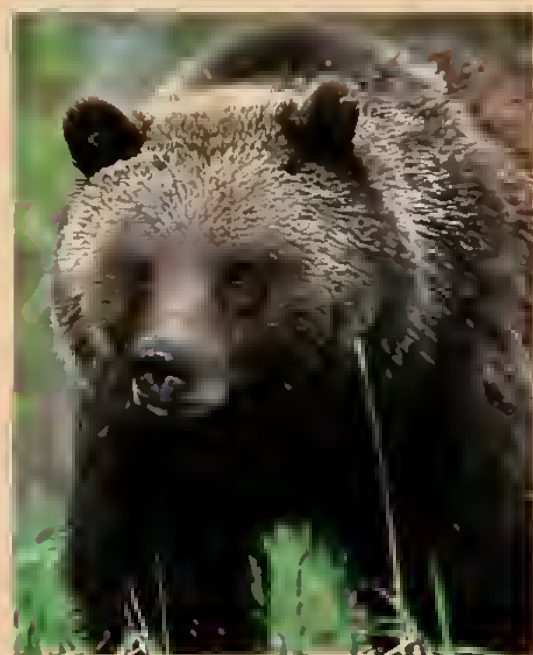
...emphasizing education engagement *and* partnerships

An active, informed public is critical to the protection of Montana's fish, wildlife, and parks resources. A group of communication specialists writes and produces press releases, public service announcements, Montana Outdoors magazine articles, video productions, and the FWP website. Hunter Education, Montana's Family Fishing Program, and other initiatives aim to increase people's knowledge, skills, and safety. Beyond this work, every FWP employee is charged with informing, engaging, and partnering with the public.

FWP bear specialists and the Wind River Bear Institute have saved about 16 grizzly bear lives over the past two years by conditioning the bears to stay out of human territory. This successful work uses trained Karelian bear dogs and rubber bullets and noise to change bad bear behavior when and where it occurs. At the same time, residents learn one-on-one and in area-wide information campaigns about bear attractions and how to eliminate them. This work has measurably reduced the need to relocate or destroy bears.

Recommendations by a 16-member Hunter Behavior Advisory Council appointed by FWP contributed to recent legislation creating a continuing hunter education program for adults and a mandatory course for convicted violators of fish and game laws. Also in 1999, 1,435 hunter and bow hunter instructors taught 9,000 students ages 12 and older.

All hunting on private property now requires landowner permission by law. Prior to this, only big game hunting required landowner permission, unless the land was posted. To assist landowners and hunters with this change, FWP developed a directory of land ownership maps and pocket-sized "access courtesy cards."



FWP is also working with other agencies to improve signing of legally accessible public lands.

The 1,504 volunteers in Montana's state parks in 1999 provided 47,326 hours of time and saved the equivalent of 23 full-time employee positions. Interns contributed 12,560 hours of work or the equivalent of six full-time employee positions for the year.

FWP DIVISIONS

PARKS:

The Parks Division is responsible for development, maintenance, and operation of all state parks and affiliated sites with an objective of providing diverse recreational opportunities while preserving important historical and cultural resources within Montana.

WILDLIFE:

The Wildlife Division is responsible for managing all species of wildlife including big game, threatened and endangered species, upland game birds and nongame birds, and waterfowl in the state.

FISHERIES:

The Fisheries Division is responsible for the management and perpetuation of Montana's fish and other aquatic resources.

CONSERVATION EDUCATION:

The Conservation Education Division acts as a clearinghouse for information on FWP activities and news items in the media and conducts a variety of educational and recreation-safety programs.

ENFORCEMENT:

The Enforcement Division is responsible for enforcing all the fish and game laws of Montana, FWP rules, and FWP Commission regulations. Division personnel also enforce state boating and snowmobile rules and state park regulations, as well as private property laws and hunting and fishing regulations.

FIELD SERVICES:

The Field Services Division is responsible for FWP's lands program and construction projects, as well as its Block Management (public hunting access) and landowner-hunter relations programs.

ADMINISTRATION & FINANCE:

The Helena-based Director's Office staff makes major policy and administrative decisions. Regional supervisors handle on-the-ground implementation of policies and programs. The Administration and Finance Division is responsible for budgeting, accounting, purchasing personnel, data processing, and administration of FWP's licensing functions.

REVENUE SOURCES 2000

FWP is funded primarily by user fees.

Funding sources include:

HUNTING AND FISHING LICENSES

This includes all license sales revenue, interest earnings, and other miscellaneous revenue. Nontelephone sales account for nearly two-thirds of FWP's total license revenue.

FEDERAL REVENUE

FWP receives federal funds to aid in fish and wildlife restoration efforts, for parks development and maintenance, and for boating safety, education, and regulation. Nearly \$9.7 million appropriated to Montana is derived from an excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition, handguns, and certain fishing equipment—as well as from an excise tax on fishing equipment and electric trolling motors, a portion of the federal fuel tax, and import duties on fishing tackle and pleasure boats.

OTHER STATE REVENUE

Other state revenue sources include fees for state parks and a portion of the state's lodging facilities use tax, a small percentage of the motor fuel tax, interest earnings from state severance tax receipts, and other miscellaneous revenue sources.

STATE GENERAL FUND

State tax dollars. Less than 1 percent of FWP's total budget comes from the general fund. About 75 percent of this funding goes to the Parks Division.

TOTAL REVENUE: 54,030,695

64.4% 34,819,989

22.3% 12,071,107

12.4% 6,718,491

0.8% 421,006

State General Fund 0.8%

Other State Revenue 12.4%

Federal Revenue 22.3%

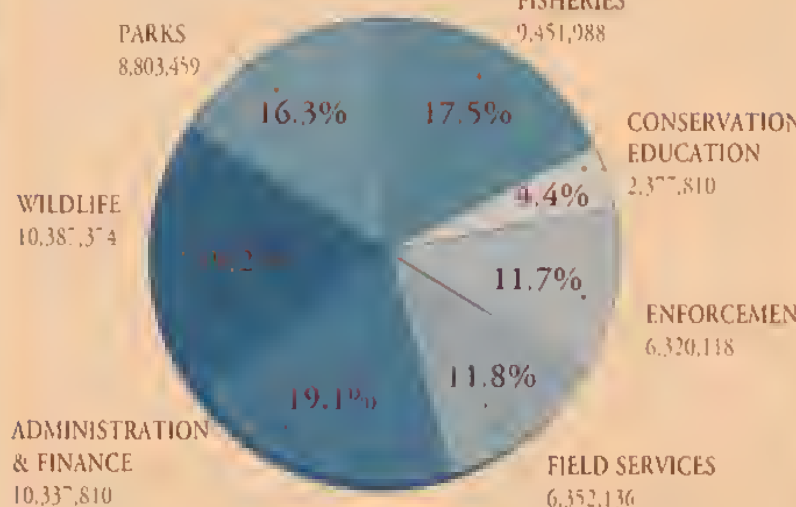
PLANNED EXPENDITURES 2000

FWP TOTAL

Operating.....45,846,870

Capital 8,183,825

Total..... 54,030,695



FWP SPENDS ITS MONEY TWO WAYS:

Operations for day-to-day management of fish, wildlife, and parks resources.

Capital for major repair and maintenance of FWP properties, for renovation and construction of facilities, and to protect and enhance critical habitats.



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks 1999 ANNUAL REPORT

Today, while we haggle over how to equitably distribute the bounty of wild game and fish resulting from 100 years of successful conservation, a new reality has us in its grip.

Can we do for other species what we have done for animals we hunt and fish? Can we maintain our open spaces and preserve important wild places? Are the historic and cultural remnants of this past century going to be preserved through the next one?

We can not wait too long for the answers. Hunters, anglers and park users have and can continue to be expected to pay their fair share. But, who will support this new work? Montanans will have to continue to wrestle with the question of how to broaden the funding base for these important endeavors.

Part of the answer is in the creation of the new Fish, Wildlife & Parks Foundation, launched in December 1999. It will build an endowment of individual and corporate donations and gifts to fund programs that will conserve wild places, restore imperiled species, maintain access, protect unique cultural and historic parks and educate kids about the wonders of our world.

Another part of the answer may be the "Conservation and Reinvestment Act" Congress is considering. This bill would send millions of federal dollars to state parks and wildlife programs by redirecting existing tax revenue.

With these two options on the horizon, there has never been a greater opportunity for people to make a difference in conservation. It is time for this generation to shape our legacy for the next century. When wildlife calls, who will answer?

Pat Graham

Patrick J. Graham

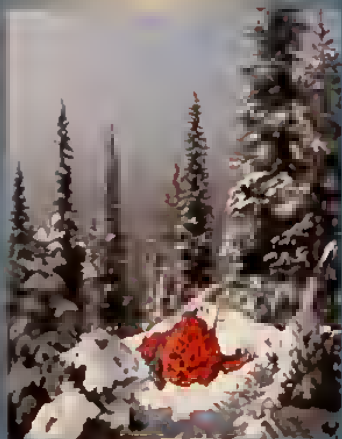
Director—Montana Fish,

Wildlife & Parks

fwp.state.mt.us
is FWP's award-winning home on the world-wide web. For a colorful look at Montana's latest hunting, fishing, wildlife, and parks news, please come visit us.

*In striving to reach our goals we...
...provide quality*

Opportunities



HUNTERS ENJOYED OVER 250,000 DAYS OF public hunting on 7.3 million acres of land in 1999 through the successful Block Management Program.



THE APPROACH TO MONITORING DEER POPULATIONS and setting hunting regulations is becoming more consistent and comprehensive. Wildlife biologists across the state are working together to refine the deer harvest management program—for example, by monitoring a total of 79 areas to continuously collect population data. Over time, this work will improve FWP's ability to detect measurable changes in deer numbers and to more precisely assess the impact of hunting and other factors on deer populations.



MONTANA'S FAMILY FISHING PROGRAM, after three years of educational fishing clinics and events, is thriving. The "Hooked on Fishing, Not on Drugs" program now involves 100 classrooms and 2,300 Montana students. Over 600 teachers have been trained in aquatic education and will potentially reach 15,725 students annually. Through the Montana Angling Youth—MAY—Club, 4,000 youngsters receive a newsletter with information on fishing in Montana. In addition, the Family Fishing Program continues to create more fishing opportunities in urban areas.



Opportunities to fish, hunt and hike grew in 1999 as FWP improved state parks, upgraded trails and fishing access sites—and increased hunter access to public and private lands.

250,000 DAYS OF public hunting on 7.3 million acres of land in 1999 through the successful Block Management Program. Even with some \$3 million in annual funding from the sale of licenses to nonresident hunting clients or outfitters, the program is unable to sign up many interested landowners. Resident hunters also show interest in helping to fund more access to private and public lands. The Private Land/Public Wildlife Advisory Council, a 15-member citizen's group, oversees the program and makes recommendations on funding to the governor and the legislature. The Block Management Working Group, a committee of landowners, hunters, and FWP staff, advises on day-to-day issues.

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About 312 fishing access sites in the state welcome anglers and campers alike. These sites, funded by angler license fees, benefited from nearly \$1 million in upgrades and maintenance in 1999. Campers will see a new \$10 camping fee at about 10 percent of these sites, if they don't have valid fishing licenses. The standard camping fee at these sites is \$5 for those with a fishing license.

PARKS AND TRAILS...

Ulm Pishkun State Park's new visitor center helps tell the ancient story of survival, culture, and land that unfolded at this buffalo jump over the past 1,500 years. FWP is working with the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation on a land trade to bring the remainder of the buffalo jump and key surrounding property into FWP management. Tribal leaders, historians, neighbors and community organizations assisted in creating this inviting center to keep the stories of Ulm Pishkun alive.

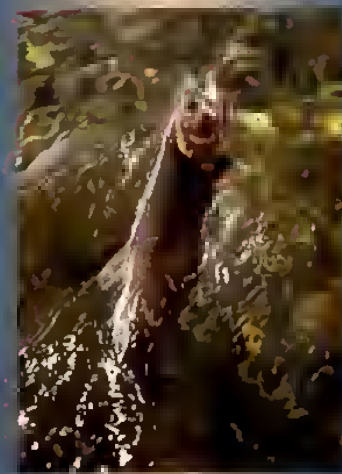
Makohika State Park near Glendive is another precious paleontological and archeological window on the past. FWP is protecting this unusual site for future generations to enjoy and study by strengthening land-use agreements. With \$100,000 in state park fees appropriated by the 1999 Montana State Legislature, FWP plans to purchase private mineral holdings within the park.

Recreational trails across the state received a \$486,000 facelift as private trail clubs and public agencies completed projects funded by the Federal Recreational Trails Grant Program administered by FWP. Groups matched at least 20 percent of project costs with dollars from local funding sources and usually contributed their time and labor.



...maintaining and enhancing the health of Montana's native species and habitat

TWO SUBSPECIES OF CUTTHROAT TROUT—WESTSLOPE AND YELLOWSTONE—



received tremendous attention in 1999, as did the fluvial Arctic grayling and the bull trout. Populations of these important native fish have declined, in some places drastically, in the past 100 years due to habitat loss, competition and hybridization with introduced nonnative trout species, water diversion, and disease. Biologists are hard at work gathering information on the distribution, population sizes, genetic purity, and habitat requirements of these native fish. Planners crafted conservation agreements uniting state and federal agencies, private landowners, conservation groups, and tribal representatives to maintain, and in some cases reestablish, these native fish in traditional waters.

Montana's fish hatchery facilities are being upgraded to protect hatchery fish from the potential infection of whirling disease. Hatcheries in Great Falls, Lewistown, and Bridger saw improvements in 1999 that will protect the hatchery water supply and enhance water quality. The project draws from both state and federal funds. Montana hatcheries produce over 43 million fish a year—including native Yellowstone cutthroat trout, westslope cutthroat trout, and walleye.

THE BLACK-TAILED PRONGHORN



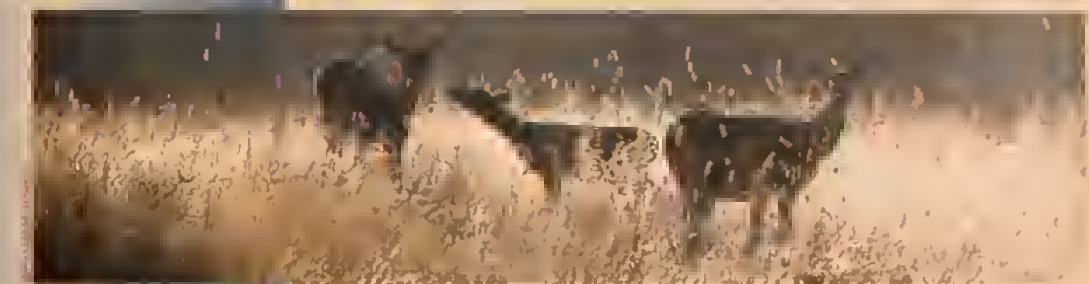
WHIRLING DISEASE IN FISH



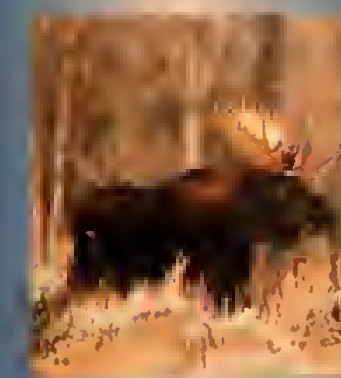
THE DOG is not threatened with extinction in Montana, but populations have declined throughout its 11-state range. Montana has at least 1,433 prairie dog colonies occupying a minimum of 76,439 acres. To address prairie dog concerns, FWP joined in an 11-state conservation plan to make the case to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for state management of the species.

FWP's Criminal Investigation Section targets commercial poachers. Time-tested methods combined with advanced technology—including DNA matching—sharpens FWP's edge in investigations. In the past two years, FWP has cracked down on seven separate organized commercial and interstate poaching operations, recovering wildlife parts and leading to severe fines and other penalties. Recent legislation increased restitution for unlawfully taking a trophy animal to a range of \$2,000 to \$30,000. Fines for repeat violations of hunting laws have increased too.

WH AND CHRONIC WASTING DISEASE in elk and deer as health issues FWP continuously collects data on and monitors. The whirling disease parasite infects fish and has been found in carving devices in 83 of the more than 350 sites sampled. FWP studies show when daily mean water temperatures fall below 45° or exceed 63° infection levels are near zero. So, for example, trout who live in very cold streams may not experience severe disease. CWD, or chronic wasting disease, is an illness that causes weight loss and other symptoms resulting in death in elk and deer. In 1999, officials confirmed an elk in a game farm herd near Philipsburg died of chronic wasting disease and the herd was eliminated. CWD has not been found in Montana wild herds and FWP continues rigorous observation and testing of wild deer and elk.



PRESERVING AND RESTORING NATIVE HABITAT...



In 1987, the Montana Legislature set aside a portion of hunting license revenues to protect seriously threatened habitat—mainly through conservation easements. Since then, about 176,000 acres of critical wildlife habitat have been protected at a cost of \$26 million. In related work, 830 short-term contracts protect 438,702 acres of upland bird habitat at a cost of \$10.5 million. FWP uses other funds to help preserve additional fish, wildlife, parks, historic, and cultural resources. In total, FWP holds perpetual land interests on about 400,000 acres and short-term contracts on 550,000 acres. In 1999, FWP completed reviews of all conservation easements to ensure the terms are being met as intended.

The Future Fisheries Improvement Program has funded \$3.8 million in habitat improvements for wild and native fish in three years, including 49 projects recommended in 1999 by the program's citizen review panel. Projects may, for example, improve water quality, restore river or stream channels, or make diversion dams more fish-friendly. All program funds come from the sale of Montana fishing licenses. Fish populations have increased in about 75 percent of projects monitored so far.